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Bulgarian Communist Party].

QUESTIONS CONCERNING MEMBERSHIP
IN THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

1. Comrade Zhelyazko Lalov of Sofia asks: "What is the procedure for accepting Party candidates and members, and may the bureau of the primary Party organization reject the candidacy of anyone whom it considers unsuitable?"

The Fifth Party Congress decided to introduce a period of candidacy into the Party. New members are now accepted into the Party exclusively from the ranks of candidates who have completed the waiting period stipulated by the statutes. The method of accepting candidates is the same as for Party members (Article 13 of the statutes).

Anyone who wishes to become a member (or a candidate) must submit an application to the bureau of the primary organization in the enterprise where he works or in the city district or village where he lives. The application may be submitted through the bureau of a Party organization which does not have the status of a primary organization, or through the leader of the Party group.

The application must include the following documents: a statement, written personally by the candidate, in which he expresses his desire to join the Party, the questionnaire from the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, and recommendations from regular Party members.

The recommendations depend on the category to which the candidate belongs. For manual workers a recommendation from two Party members of 3 years' standing is required; for all other workers, three guarantors are required, one of whom must be of 5 years' standing and the other two of 3 years' standing. For candidates from other parties, five guarantors are required, four of whom must be of 5 years' standing, and one of whom must have been in the Party since before 9 September 1944. The recommendations must be clear, well-founded, and verified by the appropriate okoliya, municipal, or rayon committee; the full names of the guarantors must be given, with the dates of their membership in the Bulgarian Communist Party and the numbers of their Party credentials.

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The submitted application with the recommendations is examined by the bureau of the primary organization, which determines whether all the documents have been properly submitted, and whether the conditions specified in the statutes have been fulfilled. It is especially necessary that the length of membership required of the guarantors by the statutes be strictly observed. It is also necessary to be careful in determining the social category to which the candidate belongs. A person who began working in production very recently cannot be considered a worker, nor can those former exploiter elements who entered productive work after the nationalization of industrial enterprises.

The bureau of the primary organization must investigate the candidate and present its opinion to the primary organization. The request for acceptance into the Party is discussed and decided only in the primary organization at a general meeting. The acceptance must be held individually and in the presence of the person who submitted the application (Article 4 of the statutes).

The bureau is required to introduce for discussion before the general meeting all applications for acceptance into the Party, including the applications of those persons whom the bureau considers unsuitable.

Party groups and Party organizations which do not have the status of a primary organization do not have the right to accept candidates and members into the Party. However, they can and must recruit new candidates and give their opinion of them to the general meeting when their acceptance into the Party is being discussed.

2. Comrade Todor Genkov of Kubrat asks: "May a Party member who has received the punishment of 'reprimand before the Party organization,' in case of a second violation of the statutes, receive a lighter punishment, for example: 'reprimand from the bureau'?"

Party members and candidates who do not fulfill the orders of higher echelons of the Party and the authorities, who violate the statutes and the program, or who are guilty of other violations, are punished in accordance with the provisions in Article 57 of the statutes.

Party organizations do not administer punishments indiscriminately. Each punishment is imposed in accordance with the nature and extent of the infraction.

According to Article 10 of the statutes, punitive measures are applied for the purpose of Party education and moral influence; for this reason, one should not resort immediately to expulsion from the Party, the highest punishment. The culprit, if he understands and feels the true significance of the punishment imposed on him by the Party, must take measures to correct his errors. The Party organization has the right to require the punished Party member to reform and not commit any further offenses. At the same time, the organization is required to take the necessary measures to help the member to correct his errors.

A Party member who has already received a punishment such as "reprimand before the organization" and who has committed a new violation before correcting his errors and before the punishment has been removed, should receive a heavier punishment, inasmuch as he has not taken cognizance of the first punishment. This applies even to cases in which the second violation is slighter than the first.

3. Comrade Kosyu Peev of Nova Zagora asks: "May a former member, who was expelled from the Party and who has since demonstrated that he has corrected the errors for which he was expelled, have his Party membership restored without passing through a period of candidacy?"

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According to the instructions of the Central Committee (confirmed by the Second Plenum of the Central Committee) concerning the acceptance of candidates, expelled Party members who give proof that they have corrected their errors may again apply for membership in the Party. They are accepted as candidates on a general basis, in accordance with the procedure specified in the statutes.

A member expelled from the Party may be restored to membership directly, without a period of candidacy, if it is proved that he was unjustly expelled. This is done on his own initiative; he must make an appropriate objection to the decision for his expulsion.

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